

## Message Text

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51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SCS-03 SCA-01 SY-04 SCCT-02 OPR-02

A-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 /125 W  
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R 171120Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3371

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 8086

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS TH

SUBJ: GENERAL SAN ON SECURITY IN SOUTH THAILAND

REF : BANGKOK 8085

IN CONVERSATION MAY 16 WITH CONSUL SONGKHLA, MAJ. GEN SAN CHITPATIMA, THE COMMANDER OF MILITARY FORCES IN SOUTH THAILAND, MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS REGARDING THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE MUSLIM POPULATED BORDER PROVINCES:

1. SAN'S NEW CABINET-APPOINTED JOB AS THE CHIEF OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE SEEKING TO RESTORE A PEACEFUL CLIMATE TO MUSLIM PROVINCES IS NOW OCCUPYING ALL HIS TIME. HE NO LONGER ATTENDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSIONS AND HAS LITTLE TIME FOR ORDINARY DUTIES AS COMMANDER OF THE 5TH MILITARY CIRCLE WITH HEADQUARTERS AT NAKHON SI THAMMARAT.

2. HE RETURNED TO BANGKOK MAY 16 TO REPORT TO THE CABINET ON RECENT MEETINGS WITH CIVILIAN, POLICE AND MILITARY LEADERS IN MUSLIM AREAS. AFTER FURTHER SESSIONS IN BANGKOK, HE INTENDS TO PROPOSE A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR REFORMING THAI-MUSLIM RELATIONSHIPS IN THE AREA. OUTLINES OF THE PLAN HE NOW HAS IN  
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MIND ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. EITHER HE OR A HIGHER RTG OFFICIAL WOULD ISSUE A STATEMENT AFFIRMING HIGHEST GOVERNMENT CONCERN FOR MUSLIM MINORITY'S RIGHTS INSIDE THAILAND AND ASSURING MUSLIMS THAT RTG RESPECTS THEIR RIGHT TO SEPARATE RELIGION, CULTURE AND LANGUAGE.

B. SHOW OF MILITARY FORCE BY REINFORCING MILITARY AND POLICE UNITS IN THE AREA. THIS IS TO DEMONSTRATE THE RTG'S DESIRE TO SAFEGUARD THE POPULACE IN FACE OF THE CRIME EPIDEMIC. THE MILITARY IS TO AVOID CONFRONTATIONS AND ONLY PROMOTE POSITIVE CONTACTS WITH LOCAL PEOPLE.

C. SAN AND HIS BROTHER AMPHORN, POLICE COMMANDER FOR THE SOUTHERN REGION, ARE TO BE HIGHLY VISIBLE AT ALL TIMES, SINCE THEY ARE WELL KNOWN AS SOUTHERNERS BORN AND RAISED IN MUSLIM PROVINCE (PATTANI) AND ARE CONCERNED WITH MUSLIM PROBLEMS.

D. SAN, AFTER CABINET APPROVAL OF HIS RECOMMENDATIONS, IS TO TRANSFER CORRUPT OR INEPT RTG OFFICIALS FROM THE AREA.

E. SAN WILL LAUNCH A DEFAMATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE FOLK-HERO AND BANDIT LEADER POR SU. WHILE SAN IS CONVINCED POR SU IS NOT INVOLVED IN THE RECENT MISSIONARY KIDNAPPING, HE NEVERTHELESS BELIEVES THAT POR SU IS AN OUTLAW AND FEELS THAT PRESS GLAMORIZATION OF HIM AS ROBIN HOOD FIGURE, ALONG WITH RIVAL POLITICAL PARTIES' COURTSHIP OF POR SU AS POTENTIAL CANDIDATE IN UPCOMING ELECTION, UNDERMINES PUBLIC FAITH IN LAW-AND-ORDER. WITH ALARMING INCREASE IN PETTY CRIME, SAN FEELS PUBLIC SHOULD BEGIN GETTING UNSAVORY SIDE OF CRIMINALS AND DETAILS OF PUNISHMENT WHEN APPREHENDED, IN ORDER TO DISCOURAGE YOUNGER ELEMENT FROM JOINING IN CURRENT LAWLESSNESS.

3. SAN FEELS THAT THE KIDNAPPED MISSIONARIES ARE STILL IN THAILAND BUT QUESTIONS AUTHENTICITY OF THE SECOND AND THIRD RANSOM NOTES, CLAIMING HE KNOWS PO YEH WELL ALSO, AND THAT THE NOTES ARE TOO LITERATE TO BE WRITTEN BY A BANDIT CHIEFTAIN. (SAN HAS SEEN LATEST ONE WRITTEN IN LOCAL MALAY DIALECT WHICH HE CAN READ.) HE THOUGHT THAT UNNAMED "OUTSIDE POLITICAL GROUPS" ARE NOW ATTEMPTING TO GAIN PUBLICITY AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SITUATION. MASTERS  
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## Message Attributes

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